Memorandum

TO : MR. CONRAD

DATE: 3/12/64

FROM : R. H. JEVONS

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY
11/22/63, DALLAS, TEXAS

On the morning of March 11, 1964, SA Cortlandt Cunningham of the Laboratory personally delivered to the President's Commission 12 items of evidence in accordance with the request contained in Mr. Rankin's letter of March 4, 1964. In response to requests of Commission staff members Oswald's rifle was dismantled and then reassembled in their presence. At that time Chief Justice Earl Warren inquired whether Mr. Cunningham could reassemble Oswald's rifle before the Commission, using only a dime as a tool, in order to make this possibility a matter of record for the Commission. It is noted that we have previously advised the Commission by letter that the rifle could be assembled with a screw driver, a dime or similar item.

Following coordination through your office with Mr. Belmont, Mr. Cunningham was sworn in before Mr. Warren and briefly testified to the ease with which this weapon may be dismantled and reassembled as well as to the type of instrument needed for its reassembly. Mr. Cunningham then reassembled the C 14 rifle before the Commission using a dime as a screw driver.

Also during the time the above material was being delivered, Mr. Warren observed a February 21, 1964, copy of Life Magazine and this copy of Life Magazine had a cover photograph of Lee Harvey Oswald holding a rifle. He pointed out the photograph to Special Agents Charles L. Killion and Cortlandt Cunningham and advised that someone representing the interests of Oswald had stated that the rifle in the photograph does not appear to be identical to the assassination rifle. This person claimed that the top of the stock of the rifle in the photograph appears straight its full length, whereas the stock of the assassination rifle is curved in the area of the comb. Mr. Warren commented that the area of the stock in the photograph in Life Magazine is somewhat shadowed and indistinct.

REC-17 2632

Mr. Warren did not make any requests of the Bureau relative to the above comments.

MAR 18 1964

CC:KO/dmg (10)
62-109060
1-Mr. Belmont
1-Mr. Baden
1-Mr. Sullivan
1-Mr. Malley, Rm. 5710
1-Mr. Rogge, Rm. 5730

79 MAR 19 1964

PERS. REC. UNIT

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RE: ASSASSINATION OF
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY
11/22/63, DALLAS, TEXAS
62-109060

For your information, the picture on the February 21, 1964, issue of Life Magazine is the same photograph as our exhibit D-20 except for retouching that has been added to enhance the detail for publication. Such retouching of photographs is a common practice in photoengraving to intensify highlight areas and separate shadow details. There has been a highlight retouched along the stock of the rifle in the Life Magazine reproduction of the D-20 picture. This retouched highlight does not follow the actual contour of the stock of the rifle. There is also evidence of retouching in other areas of the picture on the rifle and around the head and shoulders of Oswald.

Delivery of the items of evidence to the Commission on March 11, has been confirmed by appropriate letter to the Commission. It is further noted for record purposes that Mr. Cunningham brought back with him from the Commission evidence items C-14, C-10, and C-10a, which were returned by the Commission.

RECOMMENDATION:

In anticipation of a request from the President's Commission and in connection with the field's current effort to ascertain the source of the picture appearing in the afore-mentioned copy of Life Magazine, it is recommended that the field be instructed to determine whether the photograph was retouched by Life Magazine or retouched before Life Magazine obtained it.

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ADDENDUM RDR:bhg 3/13/64

In connection with the cover photograph appearing on the 2/21/64 issue of "Life" magazine which shows Oswald carrying rifle and wearing a pistol, the following is pointed out:

This Bureau has never inferred or advised the Commission that the rifle Oswald is shown holding is the same as the rifle used in the assassination of President Kennedy. This may logically be inferred; however, we have never in fact stated this since it is not possible through examination of the photograph to locate sufficient characteristics to state it is one and the same rifle. Our investigation to date has also failed to disclose information wherein Oswald's wife or close associates can state this is in fact the same rifle. Therefore, determining whether "Life" has retouched the photograph appearing on the cover of the above issue does not appear pertinent to our investigation. The President's Commission, as noted above, has been furnished a copy of this photograph and in the absence of a specific request, it is not felt any further action should be taken in this matter.

As you are aware, based on a President's Commission request, we have been endeavoring to establish the source of these photographs which have received fairly wide publication since the publication of the above issue of "Life." Our investigation in this particular matter discloses that numerous copies of this photograph were available in the Dallas Police Department and that no system of control was established. It is known that many of these photographs are missing. This information has been furnished to the President's Commission.

RDR

If would seem obvious that the Life picture does not necessarily depict the rifle Oswald owned.

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